

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 00774 01 OF 02 311735Z  
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W  
-----103040 311738Z /47

O 311520Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 927

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 JIDDA 0774

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR, MASS, SA, US  
SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF F-15 SALE TO CONGRESS

REF: STATE 24580

RESPONDING TO REFTEL WE HAVE THESE GENERAL OBSERVATIONS TO  
MAKE:

1. THAT THE EXCHANGES OF THE LAST WEEK HAVING TO DO WITH  
THE POSSIBLE DELAY OF THE SUBMISSION OF THE F-15 SALE TO  
CONGRESS HAVE PROVIDED US WITH SEVERAL VALUABLE INSIGHTS  
INCLUDING:

(A) THE BASIC FRAGILITY OF THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" BETWEEN  
U.S. AND SAG. EVEN THE SUGGESTION OF A DELAY CAUSED A  
SUSPICION TO ARISE THAT THE U.S. WAS SEEKING TO RENEGE IN  
WHOLE OR IN PART ON THE COMMITMENT. THIS SUSPICION WAS  
IMMEDIATELY EVIDENCED BY THE INITIAL SAUD REACTION (JIDDA  
0632) AND SPREAD LIKE AN EPIDEMIC-TYPE VIRUS THREATENING  
TO INFECT OUR ENTIRE RELATIONSHIP WITH SAG. THIS OCCURRED  
DESPITE REPEATED ASSURANCES THAT THE COMMITMENT WAS A  
FIRM ONE AND THE DISCUSSION WAS EXPLORATORY FOR TACTICAL

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 00774 01 OF 02 311735Z

PURPOSES ONLY.

(B) THAT THE SAUDIS FEEL A DEEP SENSE OF INSECURITY  
WHICH IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO THEIR SUPER-  
SENSITIVITY ABOUT THIS DEFENSE-ORIENTED ITEM. THEY  
KNOW EVEN THOUGH THEY DO NOT WANT TO ADMIT THAT THEIR  
ULTIMATE SECURITY RESTS WITH THE UNITED STATES. ANY  
INDICATION, NO MATTER HOW SLIGHT, OF THE U.S.'S UNWILLING-

NESS TO RECOGNIZE THEIR OBLIGATION TO PROTECT SAG STRIKES  
A SENSITIVE NERVE.

(C) THE SENSITIVITY OF THE SAUDIS TO THEIR ROLE IN THE  
US-SAG "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP." IT WAS MADE APPARENT THAT  
THE SAUDIS FEEL THAT THE RELATIONSHIP FROM THEIR STANDPOINT  
HAS BEEN MORE GIVE THAN TAKE IN RECENT MONTHS. THEIR  
NOT SO VEILED REFERENCES TO THE OIL PRICE FREEZE HAVE  
REMIND ME THAT THEY ARE NOT IMMUNE TO THE HUMAN INSTINCTS  
ILLUSTRATED BY THE CLASSIC POLITICAL STORY TOLD SO WELL BY  
THE LATE VICE PRESIDENT BARKEEY, THE PUNCH LINE BEING:  
"WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR ME LATELY?"

(D) THE BASIC SKEPTICISM THAT STILL EXISTS WITHIN THE SAG  
AS TO THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS OF THE SADAT MOVES. AHMED WAHAB,  
CHIEF OF ROYAL PROTOCOL, AND A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE  
SADAT INITIATIVE, INVITED ISA SABBAGH AND ME TO DINNER  
AFTER OUR MEETING WITH FAHD. ALSO IN ATTENDANCE WERE  
FORMER AMBASSADOR AKINS AND MOHAMMED ALIREZA, FORMER SAUDI  
AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT AND FRANCE.

2. WAHAB MADE THE POINT THAT AFTER OUR MEETING WITH  
FAHD, THERE WAS A COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' MEETING AND A  
LARGE MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT FELT THAT SADAT HAD  
PREMATURELY GIVEN AWAY THE FAMILY STORE WITH NO VALID  
CURRENCY IN EXCHANGE.

3. THE SAG PARTY LINE THEREFORE IS STILL THAT ONLY  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 JIDDA 00774 01 OF 02 311735Z

USG AND USG ALONE CAN SALVAGE SADAT BY PUTTING  
PRESSURE ON BEGIN FOR CONCESSIONS NECESSARY FOR PEACE:  
FEW IN SAG BELIEVE THAT THIS WILL HAPPEN. MOST OFFICIAL-  
DOM HERE BELIEVE IN SINCERITY OF CARTER COMMITMENT, BUT  
WOEFULLY FEW BELIEVE USG CAN OR WILL WITHSTAND BOTH THE  
COMBINATION OF (A) ISRAELI PRESSURE ON ADMINISTRATION  
AND (B) THE PRESSURE THAT ISRAELI LOBBY CAN AND IS  
BRINGING TO BEAR SO EFFECTIVELY ON THE CONGRESS AS IS  
EVIDENCED BY PRESENT F-15 SITUATION.

4. THEREFORE, THE SAUDIS SEE EITHER A COMPLETE BREAKDOWN  
OR AT BEST A FURTHER STALEMATE IN THE EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI  
TALKS RATHER THAN A BROADENING TO INCLUDE OTHER ARAB  
STATES. THEY IN TURN SEE A DETERIORATION OF THE MID-EAST  
SITUATION WITH THE U.S. HAVING TO MAKE A DECISION AS TO  
WHETHER TO FAVOR ISRAEL ON CRITICAL MATTERS SUCH AS ARMS  
(FOR EGYPT AND SAG) AND ECONOMIC AID (EGYPT).

5. BASED ON PAST PERFORMANCE, THEY FEEL THAT PROBABILITIES  
FAVOR CONTINUATION OF PRO-ISRAELI POLICY OF USG.  
THEREFORE ACTION ON F-15 MATTER BECOMES IMMEDIATE LITMUS  
TEST TO CONFIRM OR DENY THESE SUSPICIONS AT EARLIEST

POSSIBLE TIME.

6. WITH RESPECT TO REFTTEL'S COMMENTS RE RETURN FOR CONSULTATION, WE OFFER THESE COMMENTS WITH APOLOGY IF NECESSARY FOR PERSONAL REFERENCES:

(A) I PERSONALLY DO NOT RELISH PROSPECT OF RETURN TO U.S. AT THIS TIME: WEATHER REPORTS INDICATE COLD, I.E., ICE AND SNOW IN WASHINGTON, WHILE SAUDI CLIMATE IS STILL CONDUCIVE TO MIDDAY SUNNING AND SNORKELING, EVEN THOUGH EVENTS OF LAST FEW WEEKS HAVE PERMITTED NONE OF SAME; HOWEVER

(B) ANYTHING SHORT OF UNQUALIFIED SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS OF SALE OF 60 F-15'S WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS WILL NOT SATISFY COMPLETELY SAG.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 JIDDA 00774 01 OF 02 311735Z

(C) THEREFORE ANY CHANGE, MODIFICATION OR DELAY BEYOND VERY SHORT PERIOD WILL HAVE EXTREMELY NEGATIVE EFFECT HERE GIVEN SUPER-SENSITIVE POSTURE OF SAG TOP OFFICIALDOM;

(D) IF ANY ACTION IS CONTEMPLATED SHORT OF IMMEDIATE, COMPLETE FULFILLMENT OF COMMITMENT AS PERCEIVED BY SAUDIS, IT SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN WITHOUT FURTHER PRIOR CONSULTATION INCLUDING SCENARIO OF WEST GOES TO WASHINGTON.

(E) IF UNILATERAL ACTION IS TAKEN INVOLVING LESS THAN COMPLETE FULFILLMENT OF COMMITMENT AS PERCEIVED BY SAUDIS,

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 00774 02 OF 02 311732Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----103033 311735Z /47

O 311520Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 928

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 JIDDA 0774

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

AND SUCH HAPPENS WITHOUT USG HONORING SPECIFIC FAHD  
REQUEST THAT I RETURN TO WASHINGTON WITH HIS PLEA, THEN WE  
BELIEVE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" WILL BE SUBJECTED TO ADDITIONAL  
UNNECESSARY STRAIN, THE SERIOUSNESS OF WHICH WE CANNOT  
JUDGE WITH CONFIDENCE AT THIS TIME.

7. WE DO FEEL STRONGLY THAT WE SHOULD NOT, RPT NOT,  
RUN THE RISK OF THIS LATTER (E) ALTERNATIVE AT THIS  
TIME. WEST

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, MILITARY SALES, US CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS, CAT-B  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 31 jan 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978JIDDA00774  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** P850071-2528, N780002-0232  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** JIDDA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t1978015/aaaaadgy.tel  
**Line Count:** 180  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** eafd3be2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION NODS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** NODIS  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** NODIS  
**Reference:** 78 STATE 24580  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 01 jul 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3753830  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESENTATION OF F-15 SALE TO CONGRESS  
**TAGS:** PEPR, MASS, SA, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/eafd3be2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014